

THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

80-3273

National Intelligence Officers

28 January 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

VIA : Deputy Director for National Foreign Assessment
National Intelligence Officer for Warning

FROM :
National Intelligence Officer for China-EAP

SUBJECT : East Asia-Pacific Monthly Warning Meeting ☐

The following items were considered by the Community Representatives:

1. North Korea-South Korea -- Analysts were not aware of any change in order of battle on either side of the DMZ which would suggest hostilities, nor was anything of significance noted in terms of the upgrading of North Korean military capabilities. The "trench" discovered in North Korea north of the Han River estuary was regarded as being a defensive tank barrier; there were indications of possible construction of a defensive nature in the North elsewhere along the DMZ. Further information will be needed to reach a firm judgment as to the purpose of this construction, however. ☐

The main new element addressed was the political appeal by the North to elements in the South to resume talks on reunification, as conveyed in the twelve letters sent to South Korean political figures including the Prime Minister. It was agreed that inclusion of the Prime Minister was a sizeable concession by the North, which has hitherto not openly acknowledged the ROK government as a body with whom it would have to deal. Presumably the North's intent was to capitalize upon the disarray in the South following the 12 December incident (and of course the Park Chong-hee assassination) by creating divisions within political structure, but the new approach was nevertheless significant and would require watching. ☐

The question was raised about a possible Chinese role in the North's new political campaign. Doubts were expressed that the Chinese knew in advance about the twelve letters, although as recently as 22 January the Chinese Military Attache in Washington was emphasizing to

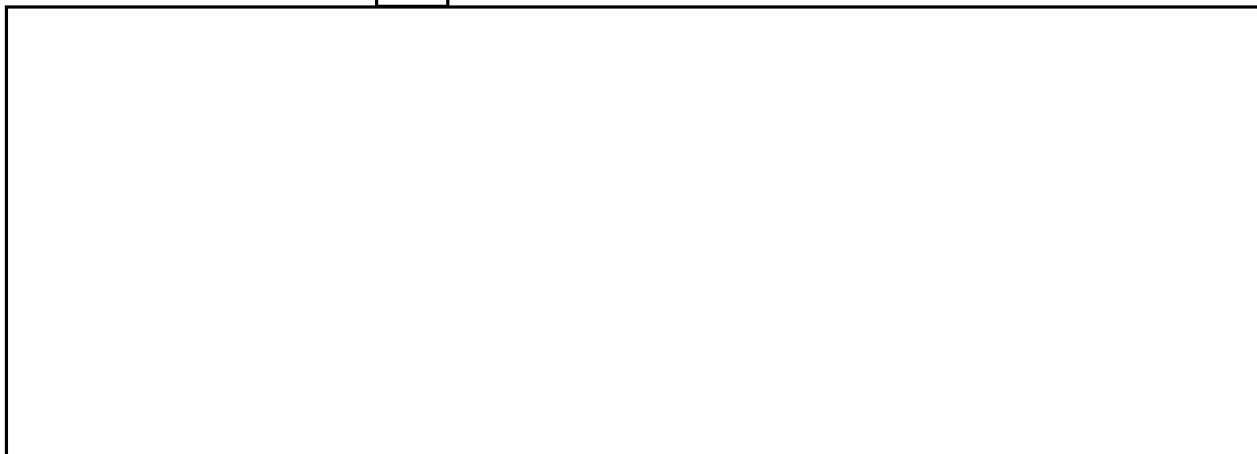
ORIGINAL CL BY SIGNER
REVIEW ON JAN 86

SECRET

25

US contacts that there would be no attack by the North and urging the US to pay attention to what it was doing. Rather, the North Korean overtures, as evidenced by a series of high-level Party and Army meetings from the 18th to the 22nd of December, appeared to be an internal response to the situation in the South with a consequent shift in strategy and possibly in policy. It was assumed that the North would spin out this new political campaign before contemplating a return to force. ☐

It was reported that the North Koreans were not happy about the Soviet move into Afghanistan, although this position had not been expressed publicly. ☐



3. Indochina

Recalling speculation in December that a major Vietnamese offensive was anticipated against Kampuchean resistance forces operating near the Thai-Kampuchea border, analysts discussed the apparent failure of this offensive to materialize. One point of view held that the offensive was, in fact, presently underway although not on the scale anticipated and with the Kampucheans avoiding combat. Frequency of Vietnamese cross border operations had been stepped up, involving reconnaissance, movement of troops into blocking positions, and implantation of mines. Major clashes had not occurred, though, and the Thai appeared to be avoiding contact with the Vietnamese. ☐

It was also speculated that toward the end of December, Vietnamese plans had been scaled down and tactics changed due to Hanoi's sensitivity to the pressure of international public opinion. Conceivably Hanoi had decided to live with the current situation on the grounds that the Thai border was sufficiently sealed off to keep Kampuchean resistance at a tolerable level, political trends internationally were in Vietnam's favor, and elsewhere in Kampuchea Hanoi was getting what it wanted in terms of internal control. Vietnamese forces were digging in for a long stay, including planting crops and bringing in NCO's from Vietnam as administrators. ☐

SECRET

25

It was pointed out that while Hanoi might indeed have decided to live with the situation, it was bearing a very heavy burden as a consequence and following the course which Chinese strategy had hoped for. A Vietnamese decision to launch the kind of operation predicted earlier was not ruled out. Also not ruled out was some Soviet role in influencing the nature and intensity of Vietnamese operations. The assurance on Vietnam's actions given in early January by the Soviet Ambassador to Thailand to Ambassador Ambramowitz were noted. In addition, there was speculation that Vietnam was exercising restraint so as not to involve the US and China in defense of Thailand. ☐

25

No particular change in the nature and level of the Soviet military presence in Vietnam was noted, although further coverage of the subject was needed. ☐

No one foresaw any particular part for Sihanouk to play under present circumstances. He was still scheduled to visit the US in February, but his visit to Singapore had apparently been "postponed" indefinitely. ☐

25

SENDER WILL CHECK CLASSIFICATION TOP AND BOTTOM		
<input type="checkbox"/> UNCLASSIFIED	<input type="checkbox"/> CONFIDENTIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> SECRET

OFFICIAL ROUTING SLIP

TO	NAME AND ADDRESS	DATE	INITIALS
1	A/NIO/W		
2			
3	DD/NFA		
4			
5			
6	DCI <i>Rec'd 1 Feb 80</i>	4 FEB 1980	

<input type="checkbox"/> ACTION	<input type="checkbox"/> DIRECT REPLY	<input type="checkbox"/> PREPARE
<input type="checkbox"/> APPROVAL	<input type="checkbox"/> DISPATCH	<input type="checkbox"/> RECOMMENDATION
<input type="checkbox"/> COMMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> FILE	<input type="checkbox"/> RETURN
<input type="checkbox"/> CONCURRENCE	<input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION	<input type="checkbox"/> SIGNATURE

⑤

NIO/Eff 4 FEB 1980
John - I think #3
represent a change in
outlook for VN invasion
Thai & should be
hooked into PDB

④

FOLD HERE TO RETURN TO SENDER

FROM: NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE NO.

DATE

NIO/China-EAP